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# SCIENCE

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## THE ORGANIZATION AND ADMINISTRATION OF NATIONAL ENGINEERING SOCIETIES.\*

THE most important factors in promoting the advance of the engineering profession and in disseminating and rendering available to the world the valuable experience and data accumulated by engineers in the practise of their profession, are the professional associations of national engineering societies. The importance of the interchange of data and results of observation and experience was recognized by engineers long before the practise of engineering had been exalted to the dignity of a profession.

While military engineering was recognized from the earliest times and great military engineers such as Vauban, and bridge and highway engineers such as Perronet, had achieved eminence, it was manifestly impracticable for military officers to organize for the purpose of interchange of information, on the very secrecy of which the military establishments of nations were dependent for their offensive and defensive efficiency. The first important step in the association of engineers into a professional body was taken when in 1828 Thomas Telford, in the name of 156 of his colleagues—some of whom had already formed a society as early as 1818—applied for royal charter for the Institution of Civil Engineers (of Great Britain). The original charter recites that the body is formed “for the general advancement of mechanical science, and more particularly for promoting the

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\* Presidential address, American Institute of Electrical Engineers, twenty-second annual convention, Asheville, N. C., June 19, 1905.